“We have a predator that came from the depths of the cosmos and took over the rule of our lives. Human beings are its prisoners. The Predator is our lord and master.

It has rendered us docile, helpless. If we want to protest, it suppresses our protest. If we want to act independently, it demands that we don't do so... I have been beating around the bush all this time, insinuating to you that something is holding us prisoner.

Indeed we are held prisoner! "This was an energetic fact for the sorcerers of ancient Mexico ... They took us over because we are food for them,

and they squeeze us mercilessly because we are their sustenance. just as we rear chickens in chicken coops, the predators rear us in human coops, humaneros. Therefore, their food is always available to them."

"No, no, no, no," [Carlos replies] "This is absurd don Juan. What you're saying is something monstrous. It simply can't be true, for sorcerers or for average men, or for anyone." "Why not?" don Juan asked calmly. "Why not? Because it infuriates you? ... You haven't heard all the claims yet. I want to appeal to your analytical mind. Think for a moment, and tell me how you would explain the contradictions between the intelligence of man the engineer and the stupidity of his systems of beliefs, or the stupidity of his contradictory behaviour.

Sorcerers believe that the predators have given us our systems of belief, our ideas of good and evil, our social mores. They are the ones who set up our hopes and expectations and dreams of success or failure. They have given us covetousness, greed, and cowardice. It is the predators who make us complacent, routinary, and egomaniacal." "'But how can they do this, don Juan? [Carlos] asked, somehow angered further by what [don Juan] was saying.

"'Do they whisper all that in our ears while we are asleep?" "'No, they don't do it that way. That's idiotic!" don Juan said, smiling. "They are infinitely more efficient and organized than that. In order to keep us obedient and meek and weak, the predators engaged themselves in a stupendous manoeuvre stupendous, of course, from the point of view of a fighting strategist. A horrendous manoeuvre from the point of view of those who suffer it. They gave us their mind! Do you hear me? The predators give us their mind, which becomes our mind. The predators' mind is baroque, contradictory, morose, filled with the fear of being discovered any minute now." "I know that even though you have never suffered hunger... you have food anxiety, which is none other than the anxiety of the predator who fears that any moment now its manoeuvre is going to be uncovered and food is going to be denied. Through the mind, which, after all, is their mind, the predators inject into the lives of human beings whatever is convenient for them. And they ensure, in this manner, a degree of security to act as a buffer against their fear."

"The sorcerers of ancient Mexico were quite ill at ease with the idea of when [the predator] made its appearance on Earth. They reasoned that man must have been a complete being at one point, with stupendous insights, feats of awareness that are mythological legends nowadays. And then, everything seems to disappear, and we have now a sedated man.

What I'm saying is that what we have against us is not a simple predator. It is very smart, and organized. It follows a methodical system to render us useless.

Man, the magical being that he is destined to be, is no longer magical. He's an average piece of meat." "There are no more dreams for man but the dreams of an animal who is being raised to become a piece of meat: trite, conventional, imbecilic.”

Carlos Castañeda